

UC SANTA BARBARA

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MUSIC CONFERENCE ENDOWED TO HONOR PROFESSOR

The man who scored and conducted the development of the nationally recognized UC Santa Barbara graduate program in musicology will have his place in campus history made permanent thanks to an endowment to the university made by his widow, Bernice Geiringer.

The gift will ensure continuation in perpetuity of the annual Karl Geiringer Lectures, named for the internationally renowned musicologist and former UCSB professor, and will establish a Bernice and Karl Geiringer graduate fellowship in music.

"The UCSB music department now ranks very high because of the energy and inspiration Geiringer put into the doctoral program in the 1960s and 1970s," said music professor and former department head Dolores M. Hsu. "He certainly established the foundation on which we have built."

The UCSB music program was a largely performance-based undergraduate endeavor when Geiringer arrived in 1962, bringing an international reputation as a music historian to his new campus.

He was 63 years old at the time, in the golden years of a career in which he had earned preeminence in his field with definitive books on the lives of Bach, the Bach family, Brahms and Haydn.

Geiringer's mandate in coming to UCSB was to initiate a doctoral program in musicology.

In doing so, Geiringer made the UCSB music library one of the most comprehensive in the UC system and helped educate students who have become leaders in the field.

His involvement with the department continued even after his retirement in 1972, as he continued to teach a graduate seminar each spring quarter thereafter until his death in 1989.

The Geiringer Lectures began in 1994 -- thanks to Bernice Geiringer -- and have brought to campus some of the world's most distinguished musical scholars each spring since.

Among them are Charles Rosen, Lewis Lockwood, Christoph Wolff, Rosalyn Tureck and Paul and Eva Badura-Skoda.

Mrs. Geiringer's endowment ensures the series will continue well on into the future.

Speakers this year -- the centennial anniversary of Geiringer's birth -- will be Walter Frisch, music professor at Columbia University and a noted Brahms scholar who has also written on Schubert and Schoenberg; Otto Biba, director of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna; and Ingrid Fuchs of the Austrian Academy of Science.

Two of Frisch's books have won ASCAP-Deems Taylor awards for distinguished writing on music.

Biba has been published widely in the area of Austrian music history and lectures throughout Europe, the United States and Japan.

Fuchs is well-known for her many articles on J.S. Bach and on Austrian music history.

This year's conference, which runs April 23 and 24, will also feature a performance by 19-year-old Russian pianist Vassily Primakov, a gifted musician currently studying at the Juilliard School in New York.

Primakov will be returning to Santa Barbara for the first time since stunning a local audience with his artistry in 1997 at Concerto Night of the Music Academy of the West's Summer Festival.

The Geiringer graduate fellowship will allow a top UCSB student to continue his or her studies at the graduate level.

It might also serve to recruit a top young scholar from another campus to UCSB.

Karl Geiringer was born in Vienna, Austria, on April 26, 1899. He studied music in his homeland and in Germany and in 1923 earned his Ph.D.

In 1930, he became curator of the archive, museum and library of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde Music Academy in Vienna where the resources on Bach, Brahms, Haydn and a vast instrument collection put him on the course he would follow the rest of his life.

But in 1938, world events forced Geiringer to leave Austria.

Hitler's occupation of Austria that year forced the closure of the Gesellschaft.

And though Geiringer considered himself a Roman Catholic, his parents had been Jewish and he felt he and his family were at risk.

The family moved to London, where Geiringer taught as a visiting professor at the Royal College of Music and worked on music broadcasts with the BBC.

But in 1940, facing internment as Austrian foreign nationals, the family immigrated again, this time to the United States.

In the U.S., Geiringer taught one year at Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y. then embarked on a 21-year stay at Boston University, during which he founded the Boston Haydn Society and ascended to the presidency of the American Musicology Society.

In 1962, after a year-long recruitment, he was persuaded to leave Boston for UC Santa Barbara.

Geiringer's books have been translated into 14 languages and several remain required reading for musicology students the world over.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.